

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated June 29, 2006, the Examiner (1) rejected claims 49 and 50 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Goldstein et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,410,326); (2) allowed claims 45-48 and 52-54; and (3) indicated that claim 51 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the recitation of base claim 49 and intervening claim 50.

The Examiner's allowance of claims 45-48 and 52-54, and indication of allowable subject matter in claim 51 is appreciated.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 49 and 50. Nevertheless, in order to advance prosecution of this application, Applicants hereby cancel claims 49 and 50 without prejudice or disclaimer. Further, by this amendment, Applicants have rewritten claim 51 in independent form to include all of the recitation of base claim 49 and intervening claim 50, as suggested by the Examiner.

The Examiner previously agreed that this amendment would place the application in condition for allowance. *Interview Summary (December 18, 2006)*. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 45-48 and 51-54 are now allowable for at least the reasons given in the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance. *Final Office Action (June 29, 2006)*, pp. 3-4.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing claims 45-48 and 51-54 in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the proposed amendment of claim 51 does not raise new issues

or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships claimed were earlier claimed. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully point out that the final action by the Examiner presented some new arguments as to the application of the art against Applicant's invention. It is respectfully submitted that the entering of the Amendment would allow the Applicants to reply to the final rejections and place the application in condition for allowance.

Finally, Applicants submit that the entry of the amendment would place the application in better form for appeal, should the Examiner dispute the patentability of the pending claims.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that this claimed invention, as amended, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references cited against this application. Applicants therefore request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration and reexamination of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

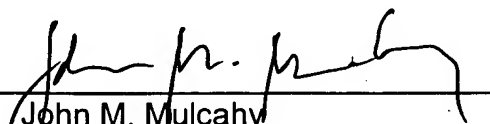
Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: December 28, 2006

By:


John M. Mulcahy
Reg. No. 55,940